

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 COLOMB 03537 250736Z

21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-01 EUR-12 SCCT-01 EB-07

/080 W

----- 032166

R 241200Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2016

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 3537

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CE

SUBJ: GSL PROMULGATES NEW EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

1. SUMMARY: TWO NEW EMERGENCY REGULATIONS INTRODUCED ON DEC 21 PROHIBIT FORMATION OF PARA-MILITARY UNITS AND ANY PUBLIC QUESTIONING OF VALIDITY OF 1972 CONSTITUTION. FIRST MEASURE IS AIMED CLEARLY AT MRS BANDARANAIKE'S TROTSKYITE COALITION PARTNERS WHO HAVE LONG URGED ARMED "DEFENCE SQUADS" BUT WHOSE POTENTIAL FOR APPLYING PRESSURE FOR RADICAL ACTIONS ON PRIME MINISTER HAS NOW BEEN BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY MEMBERS OF HER PARTY AND BY SECURITY SERVICES. SECOND REGULATION AIMS AT FORESTALLING OPPOSITION CLAIM THAT UFG'S LEGITIMATE MANDATE RUNS OUT IN MAY 1975, THUS NULLIFYING ANY OBLIGATIONS ENTERED INTO THEREAFTER. GSL FEARS THAT SUCH CHARGE COULD JEOPARDIZE ITS PROSPECTS OF SECURING FOREIGN ASSISTANCE IF FURTHER PUBLICITY IS GIVEN THAT STAND. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE ANNOUNCED ON DEC 21

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COLOMB 03537 250736Z

INTRODUCTION WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF TWO NEW

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS AIMED AT PREVENTING "SUBVERSION".
BOTH REFLECT PRESSURES ON MRS BANDARANAIKE, FROM
OPPOSITE ENDS OF IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM.

3. ONE NEW REGULATION PROHIBITS ORGANIZATION,
CONDUCT, OR PARTICIPATION IN "MILITARY OR PARA-
MILITARY EXERCISES" BY UNAUTHORIZED GROUPS. SEVERAL
MINUSCULE, PROSCRIBED ULTRA-LEFT AS WELL AS FRINGE
GROUPS ATTACHED TO OPPOSITION UNITED NATIONAL PARTY
(UNP) ARE VARIOUSLY SAID BY ELEMENTS OF UNITED
FRONT PRESS TO ADVOCATE FORMATION OF PARA-MILITARY
WINGS. MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, SLFP'S
COALITION PARTNER, TROTSKYITE LANKA SAMA SAMAJA
PARTY (LSSP, HAS LONG URGED ORGANIZATION AND
ARMING OF WORKERS' "DEFENCE SQUADS", WHICH NEW
DIRECTIONS ARE CLEARLY AIMED AT PREVENTING. SO FAR
THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT ANY LSSP SQUADS HAVE
BEEN FORMED, BUT THEIR POTENTIAL AS LSSP ADJUNCTS IN
ANY CONFRONTATION WITH PRIME MINISTERS SRI LANKA
FREEDOM PARTY (SLFP) HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED PUBLICLY
IN SLFP PRESS AND PRIVATELY BY SECURITY SERVICES,
WHICH AT PRESENT ENJOY MORE THAN USUAL ACCESS
TO MRS. BANDARANAIKE.

4. SECOND REGULATION PROHIBITS ANY QUESTIONING
OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT AND COURTS OF VALIDITY OF
SRI LANKA'S CONSTITUTION ADOPTED IN 1972.
PREAMBLE TO NEW EMERGENCY REGULATIONS RAISES SPECTER
OF "BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER" THROUGH ACTIONS
"CALCULATED TO INCITE BOTH THE PUBLIC AND STATE
OFFICERS" ARISING FROM DENIAL OF UFG'S "LEGAL
AND CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY FROM AND AFTER MAY
1975". UNP HAS LONG CLAIMED THAT HFG ARROGATION OF
ITS CURRENT SEVEN-YEAR TERM VIOLATES ITS ORIGINAL
1970-75 ELECTORAL MANDATE AND THUS INVALIDATES ANY
ACTION OR OBLIGATION ENTERED INTO AFTER MAY 1975.
UNP RECENTLY PLEDGED TO REPUDIATE SUCH OBLIGATIONS,
REPORTEDLY LEADING UFG TO FEAR THAT PUBLICITY ON
SUCH STAND COULD SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZE SRI LANKA'S
ABILITY TO SECURE ASSISTANCE AND CREDITS FROM
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 COLOMB 03537 250736Z

FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL LENDING AGENCIES. THIS
PERCEPTION IS HELD BY SURPRISINGLY BROAD SPECTRUM
OF POLITICAL OPINION AND HAS ALARMED GSL TO POINT
LEADING IT TO PROMULGATE NEW REGULATION THREATENING
ANY POLITICAL PARTY DENYING VALIDITY OF CONSTITUTION
WITH SUPPRESSION AND CONFISCATION OF ITS ASSETS
AND ITS SPOKESMEN WITH LEGAL ACTION AND LOSS OF PERSONAL PROPERTY.

5. AFTER ALMOST FIVE YEARS IN OFFICE, MRS.
BANDARANAIKE KNOWS VERY WELL THAT SHE IS IN
CHARGE OF REAL LEVERS OF POWER IN SRI LANKA AND,
AS THIS LATEST EXERCISE DEMONSTRATES, SHE WILL
NOT HESITATE TO FIGHT BACK WHEN PRESSURED BY
CONFRONTATION TACTICS. BEYOND IMMEDIATE MOMENT,
HOWEVER, NEW REGULATIONS ARM HER WITH YET ADDITIONAL
AUTHORITY DECISIVELY TO COUNTER ANYONE'S INCLINATION
TO STIR TROUBLE DURING ARDOUS TIMES THAT LIE AHEAD.
BYRNE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, EMERGENCY PLANNING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974COLOMB03537
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740374-0791
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741213/aaaaakne.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 AUG 2002 by kellew0>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GSL PROMULGATES NEW EMERGENCY REGULATIONS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, CE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005